

Come Follow Me Lesson 15 Mosiah 1-3 Apr 13-19

Mosiah 1 (or maybe 3)

Video Presentation No. 10

This lesson is part one of two parts for King Benjamin's discourse. It helps to understand Old Testament Hebrew tradition to understand what's going on in this setting.

"Note that the main story in the book of Mosiah is told in the third person rather than in the first person as was the custom in the earlier books of the Book of Mormon. The reason for this is that someone else is now telling the story, and that "someone else" is Mormon. With the beginning of the book of Mosiah we start our study of Mormon's abridgment of various books that had been written on the large plates of Nephi. (3 Nephi 5:8-12.) The book of Mosiah and the five books that follow -- Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, and Mormon -- were all abridged or condensed by Mormon from the large plates of Nephi, and these abridged versions were written by Mormon on the plates that bear his name, the plates of Mormon. These are the same plates that were given to Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni." (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.173 These chapters are the coronation ceremony for Mosiah. Ancient customs were such that Mosiah probably would have spoken first, then King Benjamin was the last speaker. We do not have Mosiah's speech. Perhaps that was part of the 116 pages of the lost manuscript.)

The Case of Mosiah Chapter 1

The first chapter of Mosiah in our current text does not begin in any expected way. In the first place, we are missing the introductory material that Mormon included with all other books he edited. This strongly suggests that our Mosiah chapter 1 was not the beginning of the book of Mosiah. Skousen's examination of the manuscripts indicates that what we have as Mosiah 1 was originally Mosiah III, or the third chapter of the book of Mosiah rather than the first (Skousen, Royal. "Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon." In: *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1. FARMS 1994 p. 138).

This same evidence indicates that while this was not a new *book* it was a new *chapter*. Based on the nature of chapter breaks, can we make any inference about what is missing? Unfortunately, the beginning verse of our current Mosiah 1 appears to be much more of a conclusion than a beginning. In more modern editing procedures, we might want to see "And now there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla, among all the people who belonged to king Benjamin, so that king Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days" as the concluding section to a description of those contentions.

Mosiah V (current chapter 7) also begins with a statement of peace, but that beginning does not have the reference to anything as obviously previous as the contentions, so that chapter break does not necessarily help us. This first verse, and the very direct connection to the contentions briefly mentioned in Words of Mormon 1:12 and 17-18 suggest that Mormon is writing to directly connect the small plate material into the beginning of this chapter of Mosiah. We may suppose, therefore, that at least one of our missing chapters is being summarized in Words of Mormon 1:12-18. Since this is the record of Mosiah and not Benjamin, however, we may also speculate that the original first chapter dealt with Mosiah and his removal from Nephi to Zarahemla. This change in ruler occasioned by the change of location, would be sufficient reason to begin a new dynastic record, and to begin with the new ruler's name, Mosiah. While

the principles governing book naming are not clear, it is abundantly clear that book names do not change with every change of ruler (we have Mosiah I, Benjamin, and Mosiah II in this book of Mosiah - see also Tvedtnes, John A. "Colophons in the Book of Mormon." In: *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*. FARMS 1991, p. 36). Therefore, the change of the name to Mosiah from whatever it was before (we know that it began with the book of Lehi, but do not know if there was anything between the book of Lehi and the book of Mosiah) we may suggest a dramatic change, such as a new dynasty.

Skousen's suggestion for the possible fit between our current Mosiah 1 and the Words of Mormon is an interesting possibility, and perhaps the best explanation of the nature of the very specific tie between Words of Mormon and the beginning of our current Mosiah 1:

"All of this leads me to believe that the lost 116 pages included not only all of Lehi, but also part of Chapter I of the original Mosiah. Joseph Smith retained from the summer of 1828 some small portion of the translation (D&C 10:41) and may have added a few additional pages in March 1829 (D&C 5:30), just prior to Oliver Cowdery's arrival in the following month. In all, these pages probably included the following portions from the beginning of the original Mosiah; the rest of chapter I, all of chapter II, and perhaps the beginning of chapter III. In fact, these few pages could have been part of the original manuscript that was placed in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House in 1841. If so, they could well have been crossed out so as not to repeat the end of Amaleki's account (from the book of Omni in the small plates) and the material Mormon covered in his transitional "The Words of Mormon." (Skousen, Royal. "Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon." In: *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1. FARMS 1994 p. 139).

Since Joseph Smith did not know of the small plates text until later (D&C 10:38-42), and because Words of Mormon is clearly both an appendage to the small plates as well as a transition into our current Mosiah 1, the small plates must have been physically inserted just before Mosiah III (1). What this suggests is that when Joseph was translating the plates, either through explicit or unconscious direction, he did not translate the plates continuously, but skipped over the physical plates corresponding to the small plates (our 1 Nephi - Words of Mormon). The Lord then instructed him to return to them later.

King Benjamin teaches his sons the language and prophecies of their fathers—Their religion and civilization have been preserved because of the records kept on the various plates—Mosiah is chosen as king and is given custody of the records and other things. [About 130—124 B.C.] (The lack of a preface for the Book of Mosiah in the present Book of Mormon is probably because the text makes up the Mosiah account some time after its original beginning. The original manuscript of the Book of Mormon, written in Oliver Cowdery's hand, has no title for the Book of Mosiah. It was inked in later, prior to sending it to the printer for typesetting. The first part of Mormon's abridgment of Mosiah's record was evidently on the 116 pages lost by Martin Harris. John A. Tvedtnes, *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, 33)

1 AND now there was no more contention in all the ^aland of Zarahemla, among all the people who belonged to king Benjamin, so that king Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days. (This sounds more like the end of a chapter rather than the beginning of one.)

2 And it came to pass that he had three ^asons; and he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman. And he caused that they should be ^btaught in all the ^clanguage of his fathers (It is sufficient to note that the teaching of language was thought to be of such unusual significance that it was mentioned even in Mormon's abridgment. What is never of sufficient importance to mention is that a child learns the spoken language of the parents. That is expected. What is unusual, however is the teaching of a second language, hence the need to mention this special learning for the sons of Mosiah. Precisely what

they were learning comes from verse 4.), that thereby they might become men of understanding; and that they might know concerning the prophecies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers, which were delivered them by the hand of the Lord. (Benjamin's sons were taught out of the brass plates as well as large plates of Nephi.)

3 And he also taught them concerning the records which were engraven on the ^aplates of brass, saying: My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these ^bplates, which contain these records and these commandments, we must have suffered in ^cignorance, even at this present time, not knowing **the mysteries of God.** (“The term *mysteries of God* as used in the Book of Mormon denotes the saving principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are termed mysteries because they are unavailable to the natural man, not because they are mysterious or difficult to understand. They must be revealed from God through faith and obedience. They are designed to lead God’s children to eternal life. ’A mystery is a truth that cannot be known except through divine revelation—a sacred secret. In the days of Paul the important truth that Gentiles were to be admitted to the Kingdom of God without observing the Law of Moses was a ‘mystery’ (Eph. 1:9-11; Col. 1:25-27). In our day such great truths as those pertaining to the restoration of the Priesthood, the work for the dead, and the re-establishment of the Church are ‘mysteries,’ because they could not have been discovered except by revelation.’ (Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *The Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, p. 141) “It was their knowledge of the mysteries of God that qualified Nephi to write his record and King Benjamin to preach his sermon. The material between Mosiah 2:9 and 5:15 constitutes a discussion of some of the most important mysteries of God.” (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 1981, p. 154) Neal A. Maxwell said: “As we see from the content of Benjamin’s sermon, the so-called mysteries referred to by King Benjamin are actually the plain but precious things required for salvation and for exaltation: (quotes Mosiah 1:5).” (John W. Welch, and Stephen D. Ricks, *King Benjamin’s Speech: Made Simple*, p. 6) As noted in Words of Mormon 1:17: “They had many prophets, you notice. Verse 3: My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates, which contain these records and these commandments, we must have suffered in ignorance. This is in spite of the fact that they had many prophets. Don’t get the idea that because we have a living prophet to answer all our questions and solve all our problems for us – nothing could be more absurd than that. Here he says, “Were it not for these plates... we must have suffered in ignorance, even at this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God.” Well, don’t prophets reveal mysteries of God? The Lord told Joseph Smith, if I’ve told you a thing once I won’t tell you again; if it’s in the scriptures, don’t ask me about it. You look it up yourself; I’m not going to repeat these things. If we don’t take advantage of the revelations we have, we are not going to have more. If the heavens have been silent, there is a good reason for it. Hugh Nibley, TBM, 1:438.)

4 For it were not possible that our father, Lehi, could have remembered all these things, to have taught them to his children, except it were for the help of these plates; for he having been taught in the ^alanguage of the Egyptians (It is difficult to know exactly what is meant when King Benjamin indicated that the brass plates were written in Egyptian. Perhaps the phrase ‘language of the Egyptians’ in this verse means the same thing that Nephi meant when he spoke of the language of his father (and thus the language of the Book of Mormon) as consisting of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. That is to say, the Nephite record reflected the Hebrew culture and background of the Jews, but was written in Egyptian characters. In the present context, then, the brass plates may have been records of Hebrew prophets and their prophecies, all recorded in an Egyptian script. Robert Millet, *The Brass Plates*, p 421-22. Hugh Nibley has said he thinks the brass plates would have been written in Hebrew.) therefore he could read these engravings, and teach them to his children, that thereby they could teach them to their children, and so fulfilling the commandments of God, even down to this present time.

5 I say unto you, my sons, ^awere it not for these things, which have been kept and ^bpreserved by the hand of God, that we might ^cread and understand of his ^dmysteries, and have his ^ecommandments always before our eyes, that even our fathers would have dwindled in unbelief, and we should have been like

unto our brethren, the Lamanites, who know nothing concerning these things, or even do not believe them when they are taught them, because of the ^ftraditions of their fathers, which are not correct.

6 O my sons, I would that ye should remember that these sayings are true, and also that these records are ^atrue. And behold, also the plates of Nephi, which contain the records and the sayings of our fathers from the time they left Jerusalem until now, and they are true; and we can know of their surety because we have them before our eyes.

7 And now, my sons, I would that ye should remember to ^asearch them diligently (John Taylor said: "Search the scriptures," was the command of Jesus, 'for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me.' (John 5:39.) I would not only search the scriptures that we now have, but I would search also every revelation that God has given, does give, or will give for the guidance and direction of his people, and then I would reverence the Giver, and those also whom he makes use of as his honored instruments to promulgate and make known those principles; and I would seek to be governed by the principles that are contained in that sacred word." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 16, p. 371, February 1, 1874). Joseph Smith said: "The things of God are of deep import; and time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 137), that ye may profit thereby; and I would that ye should ^bkeep the commandments of God, that ye may ^cprosper in the land according to the ^dpromises which the Lord made unto our fathers.

8 And many more things did king Benjamin teach his sons, which are not written in this book.

9 And it came to pass that after king Benjamin had made an end of teaching his sons, that he waxed ^aold, and he saw that he must very soon go the way of all the earth; therefore, he thought it expedient that he should confer the kingdom upon one of his sons.

10 Therefore, ^{*}he had Mosiah brought before him; and these are the words which he spake unto him, saying: **My son, I would that ye should make a proclamation throughout all this land among all this ^apeople, or the people of Zarahemla, and the people of Mosiah who dwell in the land, that thereby they may be gathered together** (This was a royal edict. Anyone choosing to not attend would be banished from the kingdom for three years. Hugh Nibley); **for on the morrow I shall proclaim unto this my people out of mine own mouth that thou art a ^bking (The Mulekites may have been demanding that one their ancestors should be the king. So Benjamin is going to make sure they understand that Mosiah is their king.** It is interesting to note that the text mentions Mosiah as "a king" and not as "the" king. Christ is "The King.") and a ruler over this people, whom the Lord our God hath given us. (Once again we are required to read between the lines of the text. Benjamin has had controversy and conflict during his reign, though at this very point in time he has peace (verse 1). Even at this date (comprising the end of the life of Mosiah I and most of Benjamin's life - perhaps at least 60 years given the typical life span in the Book of Mormon and the overlap between Mosiah I and Benjamin) we have two identifiable political factions, one retaining the identity of Zarahemla and one the identity of Mosiah (and interestingly *not* Nephi). This division in the people becomes the background against which Benjamin's coming proclamation will make sense (see verse 11), and potential (or past) divisions between the two groups may also explain the need to declare Mosiah II as king "from mine own mouth." The clear pronouncement in a public forum would be calculated to decrease potential divisions and disagreements about succession. Brant Gardner. Benjamin knew of no greater honor that could be conferred upon his people than that they bear the name of their Master and Savior, the Christ, and that they through the adoption of righteousness become his sons and daughters. Such was the setting in which Mosiah was consecrated (anointed) as their king in the stead of his father. How like that great and grand council of heaven this must have been, where the Eternal Father chose his most righteous Son to be our king, and where we placed ourselves under covenant to sustain him as such! DCBM, 2:132)

11 And moreover, **I shall give this people a ^aname, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people** (Those in the covenant as opposed to those who do not make the covenant.) which the Lord

God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I do because they have been a ^bdiligent people in keeping the commandments of the Lord. **(At this point there are two peoples living together. The people of Mosiah and the Mulekites. Benjamin, by giving them a new common name, is unifying the people into one people. It is his way of making sure there is peace after he is gone. It is also to establish the people in a new covenant.)**

12 And I give unto them a name that never shall be blotted out, except it be through ^atransgression. **(Almost all God's promises are conditional upon our righteousness.)**

13 Yea, and moreover I say unto you, that if this highly favored people of the Lord should fall into ^atransgression, and become a wicked and an adulterous people, that the Lord will deliver them up, that thereby they become ^bweak like unto their brethren; and he will no more ^cpreserve them by his matchless and marvelous power, as he has hitherto preserved our fathers.

14 For I say unto you, that if he had not extended his arm in the preservation of our fathers they must have fallen into the hands of the Lamanites, and become victims to their hatred.

15 And it came to pass that after king Benjamin had made an end of these sayings to his son, that he gave him ^acharge concerning all the affairs of the kingdom.

16 And moreover, he also gave him charge concerning the records which were engraven on the ^aplates of brass; and also the plates of Nephi; and also, the ^bsword of Laban, and the ^cball or director, which led our fathers through the wilderness, which was prepared by the hand of the Lord that thereby they might be led, every one according to the heed and diligence which they gave unto him. **(This verse is interesting because it catalogs what was transferred from one prophet to another. It included all the records, the plates of brass, the plates of Nephi (both large and small), the sword of Laban, and the Liahona. These were all kept together, presumably transferred as a group to every prophet who was subsequently given charge of them. The writings of Mormon imply that there were a lot of records by the time he received charge of these things, see Mormon 1:3-4. This truth is shown more clearly in the quote of Brigham Young: "Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph when he deposited these plates... When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room *more plates than probably many wagon loads*; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: 'This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ.'" (Journal of Discourses, vol. 19, p. 40, emphasis added)**

17 Therefore, as they were ^aunfaithful they did not prosper nor progress in their journey, but were ^bdriven back, and incurred the displeasure of God upon them; and therefore they were smitten with famine and sore ^cafflictions, to stir them up in ^dremembrance of their duty.

18 And now, it came to pass that Mosiah went and did as his father had commanded him, and proclaimed unto all the people who were in the land of Zarahemla that thereby they might gather themselves together, to go up **(we go up to the temple spiritually)** to the ^atemple (The pattern of the Nephite temples, at least until after the time of Christ's visit, was that of Solomon's temple, the outer court being a place of instruction. DCBM, 2:134) to hear the words which his father should speak unto them. (We are uninformed as to when and by whom the temple in Zarahemla was built. However, in all probability it was erected in the third century B.C. by Mosiah I subsequent to his arrival in Zarahemla and after his appointment as king over those living in that land. (Omni 1:12, 19.) It was to this second Nephite temple that the people gathered to hear King Benjamin. In doing so, they came prepared to offer "sacrifice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses." (Mosiah 2:3.) This has led to a current

theory that the king chose that particular date because it coincided with an annual religious festival. While not unlikely, Benjamin's instructions to his son Mosiah (Mosiah 1:10), together with his unprecedented message to the people, suggest that Mosaic law and ritual were, at best, of secondary concern. Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture*, 7:209. "This is the first reference to a temple in the land of Zarahemla. The building of a temple mentioned earlier in the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 5:16) refers to the temple in the land of Nephi. Our present Book of Mormon does not provide any additional information concerning when or by whom this temple in Zarahemla was constructed." (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.173))

* Verse 10 [About 124 B.C.].

Mosiah 2

This lesson is part one of two parts for King Benjamin's discourse. It helps to understand Old Testament Hebrew tradition to understand what's going on in this setting.

"Note that the main story in the book of Mosiah is told in the third person rather than in the first person as was the custom in the earlier books of the Book of Mormon. The reason for this is that someone else is now telling the story, and that "someone else" is Mormon. With the beginning of the book of Mosiah we start our study of Mormon's abridgment of various books that had been written on the large plates of Nephi. (3 Nephi 5:8-12.) The book of Mosiah and the five books that follow -- Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, and Mormon -- were all abridged or condensed by Mormon from the large plates of Nephi, and these abridged versions were written by Mormon on the plates that bear his name, the plates of Mormon. These are the same plates that were given to Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni." (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.173 These chapters are the coronation ceremony for Mosiah. Ancient customs were such that Mosiah probably would have spoken first, then King Benjamin was the last speaker. We do not have Mosiah's speech. Perhaps that was part of the 116 pages of the lost manuscript.)

King Benjamin addresses his people—He recounts the equity, fairness, and spirituality of his reign—He counsels them to serve their heavenly King—Those who rebel against God shall suffer anguish like unquenchable fire. [About 124 B.C.] ("With the exception of the words of Christ himself, no speech in sacred literature, in our opinion, surpasses that of King Benjamin. Delivered at the temple in the city of Zarahemla around 124 BC, this text is a treasure trove in inspiration, wisdom, eloquence, and profound spiritual experience and insight. Little wonder that Mormon saw fit to include this speech as he compiled the most significant Nephite records into the Book of Mormon... That oration was a landmark in its own day, and it still stands as a shining beacon of truth and goodness in our day." (John W. Welch, and Stephen D. Ricks, *King Benjamin's Speech: Made Simple*, p. vii) "Many readers have intuitively sensed the profundity of its message. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie found that it contained 'what well may be the greatest sermon ever delivered on the atonement of Christ the Lord.'** Milton R. Hunter marveled at King Benjamin, observing that 'perhaps no other teacher except the Master has given a more beautiful, humble sermon.'... "Memorable oratory is dramatic. 'Truly great oratory,' it is said, 'is the result only of a great occasion.' The setting timing, and delivery of Benjamin's speech make it no ordinary, off-the-cuff conversation. His counsel and testimony were delivered in a powerfully dramatic setting that even today attracts the reader's attention and contributes to its literary effectiveness." (John W. Welch, *King Benjamin's Speech: Made Simple*, pp. 51, 58) Neal A. Maxwell: "The general substance of the Book of Mormon itself, of course, encapsulates this rich and special sermon, which is like a sparkling, doctrinal diamond that can be approached and appreciated in so many different ways. Surely King Benjamin kept his promise not to 'trifle' with words (Mosiah 2:9), for his was a rich and

whole-souled sermon.” (John W. Welch, and Stephen D. Ricks, *King Benjamin’s Speech: Made Simple*, p. 4))

1 AND it came to pass that after Mosiah had done as his father had commanded him, and had made a proclamation throughout all the land, that the people ^agathered themselves together throughout all the land, (The manner in which the people of King Benjamin gathered to the temple from throughout the land to hear his words suggests that it was not the first time that they had done so. DCBM, 2:135) that they might go up to the ^btemple (Similar to the temple of Jerusalem. Many would attend in the courtyard, or temple grounds.) to ^chear the ^dwords which king Benjamin should speak unto them. (According to Brother Nibley, this was probably held during the Feast of Tabernacles, held in September or October. This is also the Hebrew new year, which is when kings were usually crowned. Because the introduction to this occasion is explicitly connected with the Law of Moses (Mosiah 2:3) we may legitimately look to the scriptures for an explanation of the type of festival to which the people were invited. Szink and Welch have examined the possible connections, and link Benjamin’s speech to the "Autumn Festival Complex." Specifically they note: Of the three annual festival times in ancient Israel, the autumn festival complex was the most important and certainly the most popular in ancient Israel. In early times apparently was called the Feast of Ingathering. According to many scholars, the various components of the autumn festival were celebrated as a single season of celebration in the earliest periods of Israelite history. Its many elements were not sharply differentiated until later times, when the first day of the seventh month became Rosh ha-Shanah (New Year), followed by eight days of penitence, then followed on the tenth day of the month by Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and on the fifteenth day by Sukkot (Festival of the Tabernacles), concluding with a full holy week" (Szink, Terrence L. and John W. Welch. "An Ancient Israelite Festival Context." In: *King Benjamin’s Speech*. FARMS, 1998 p. 159).)

2 And there were a great number, even so many that they did not number them **(It was probably customary to take a census of the people, but because there were so many, they did not do so at this time. The largeness of the crowd of people may be explained in that this celebration may have occurred during a Jubilee year, which would have caused more people to attend.)**; for they had multiplied exceedingly and waxed great in the land. (At present, we cannot determine with any accuracy the extent of the land of Zarahemla, nor its population in 124 B.C. However, the fact that the people were given only a day’s notice to gather indicates that no point was more than about fifty miles from the city. And although the population is described as being "a great number, even so many that they did not number them" (Mosiah 2:2), even with their tents, they were accommodated within, or adjacent to, the walls of the temple. Then too, while the hastily built tower did not enable King Benjamin to be heard by everyone, such had been its purpose. Therefore, the people could not have been widely scattered. All this suggests that the combined populations of both Nephites and "Mulekites" was, at most, numbered in the thousands. Yet it was a vast number who gathered to offer sacrifice, give thanks for their blessings, and hear their king. Unable to be heard by everyone, King Benjamin had his words "written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice." (Mosiah 2:8.) Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture*, 7:209-210)

3 And they also took of the ^afirstlings of their flocks, that they might offer ^bsacrifice and ^cburnt ^dofferings ^eaccording to the law of Moses; **(This sacrifice was to purify the people in preparation for his discourse.** This same offering will be offered again in our dispensation by the sons of Levi in fulfillment of the prophecies of Malachi and John the Baptist, and the promise of Joseph Smith. Mal 3:3-4; D&C 13, TPJS, p. 172-73. DCBM, 2:135.)

4 And also that they might give thanks to the Lord their God, who had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, and who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies, and had ^aappointed just men to be their ^bteachers, and also a just man to be their king, who had established peace in the ^cland of Zarahemla, and who had taught them to ^dkeep the commandments of God, that they might rejoice and be filled with ^elove towards God and all men.

5 And it came to pass that when they came up to the temple, they pitched their tents round about, every man according to his ^afamily, consisting of his wife, and his sons, and his daughters, and their sons, and their daughters, from the eldest down to the youngest, every family being separate one from another. (In this verse we are given some important organizational information about Benjamin's people. The first important piece of information is that when the people come, they come as kin groups. In a politically and religiously important ceremony, they come officially, and officially means in family groups. This is a different type of gathering than coming to market. In a market atmosphere we would not expect the entire family. That the family comes indicates both the importance of the event and the fact that the basic organizational mode of society is still kinship based. **The gathering by families echoes the Feast of Tabernacles:** "The Mosaic law specified that "all... males shall appear before the Lord God" (Exodus 23:17), and in Deuteronomy the entire family was expected to participate: "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates" (Deuteronomy 16:14; compare 31:10-12) (Szink, Terrence L. and John W. Welch. "An Ancient Israelite Festival Context." In: *King Benjamin's Speech*. FARMS, 1998 p. 184). Brant Gardner.)

6 And they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his ^atent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which king Benjamin should speak unto them; (Like watching General Conference on TV at home.)

7 For the multitude being so great (The crowd may have been as large as 25,000 people.) that king Benjamin (King Benjamin was the embodiment of a king of the Melchizedek order—a truly righteous sovereign who was the greatest of all because he was the servant of all. When purely worldly monarchs are measured against his example, they are all found wanting. But King Benjamin partook of the spirit of Nephi, who, in speaking of his own service to his people, said, "I did for them according to that which was in my power." (2 Ne. 5:18.) Doubtless this spirit characterized most, if not all, of Nephi's successors so that his dynasty was surely among the most righteous in all history. The Book of Mormon teaches that the ideal form of government is theocratic—the kingdom of God. (Mosiah 29:12-13.) Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture* 7:210) could not teach them all within the walls of the **temple**, therefore he caused a ^atower to be erected (Broadcast towers to send the talks of the brethren to the world.), that thereby his people might hear the words which he should speak unto them.

8 And it came to pass that he began to speak to his people from the tower; and they could not all hear his words because of the greatness of the multitude; therefore he caused that the words which he spake should be written (Conference report and Ensign) and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice, that they might also receive his words. (Even with the addition of the tower, all of the gathered people would not be able to hear, therefore Benjamin causes the speech to be written. Again there is more information in this verse than would first appear. One of the interesting questions we might ask is why a large group of people would hang around if they could neither hear, nor probably see, the person they came to hear and see. The answer is that this occasion is more than the speech. For many of them, the celebration and the chance to visit with friends (not to mention the feasting) would be reason enough to come and stay. The audience would have had multiple reasons for coming to the speech. Many of them were fulfilled even when they could not hear nor see. The second piece of information is that the speech was written down expressly so that the people could have his words. We know that Nephite society was literate, but we do not know the extent of the literacy. It would be a very unusual society in the ancient world where there was a very high literacy rate, and particularly in Mesoamerica among those who were farmers in the fields. While the writing of the speech might mean that it was distributed so that many could read it, this would also require a large number of copies and a large amount of material on which to write, in addition to a significant amount of time. Given the probable illiteracy of the general populace, the difficulty in mass producing writing, and the fact that the material on which the speech would be written had to have been manufactured locally or traded for, it is more likely that there were a limited number of copies created so that emissaries from the king could

read the speech to the gathered people in the hamlets. Brant Gardner.)

(The talk begins here:) 9 And these are the words which he ^aspake and caused to be written, saying: My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day; for I have not commanded you to come up hither to ^btrifle with the words which I shall speak, but that you should ^chearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your ^dhearts that ye may understand, and your ^eminds that the ^fmysteries of God may be unfolded to your view. (Active listening.)

10 I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear ^ame, or that ye should think that I of myself am more than a mortal man. **(This is a shock to the people to think that the king is like them.)**

11 But I am like as yourselves, subject to all manner of infirmities in body and mind; yet I have been chosen by this people, and ^aconsecrated by ^bmy father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people; and have been kept and preserved by his matchless power, to serve you with all the might, mind and strength which the Lord hath granted unto me. (“In this beautiful discourse on humility we find one of the keys to Benjamin’s greatness. Humility is not a mental groveling about our worthlessness. We are the children of God and the crown of his creations. True humility is a recognition of our actual position in relationship to God. If we truly sensed our total dependence upon God, as Benjamin did, it would profoundly affect our daily living. It is when we forget our position in relationship to God that we begin to trust in our own wisdom, pursue our own course, abuse our rights, and ignore our blessings.” (Book of Mormon Student Manual, 1981, p. 155))

12 I say unto you that as I have been suffered to ^aspend my days in your service, even up to this time, and have not sought ^bgold nor silver nor any manner of riches of you; **(The people did pay taxes, but not excessively.)**

13 Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons, nor that ye should make slaves one of another, nor that ye should murder, or plunder, or steal, or commit adultery; nor even have I suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness, and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord, in all things which he hath commanded you—

14 And even I, myself, have ^alabored with mine own ^bhands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be ^claden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne—and of all these things which I have spoken, ye yourselves are witnesses this day. (The people had not labored to support their king; he had earned his bread by his own sweat as the Lord had commanded Adam. His son, Mosiah, did likewise. (See Mosiah 6:7.) Consequently, the people were not "laden with taxes." (Mosiah 2:14.) Burdensome, unjust taxation is a form of theft. King Benjamin realized that a government has no more right to steal from its citizens than the citizens have to steal from one another. When *all* labor, *none* are oppressed. Since political morality depends upon personal morality, the strict observance of the moral code by both the ruler and the ruled was the very foundation of his benevolent reign. Rodney Turner, Studies in Scripture 7:211)

15 Yet, my brethren, I have not done these things that I might ^aboast, neither do I tell these things that thereby I might accuse you; but I tell you these things that ye may know that I can answer a clear ^bconscience before God this day.

16 Behold, I say unto you that because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast, for I have only been in the service of God.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: SERVICE: CHARITY: Moroni 7:43-48; D&C 88:125; Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8; CARE FOR THE POOR: Mosiah 4:26; Alma 34:28-29; D&C 52:40; Matthew 25:40. WE ARE TO SERVE: Mosiah 2:17; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 42:29; D&C 107:99-100. PREACH MY GOSPEL: CHARITY AND LOVE: WHAT IS CHARITY? Moroni 7:45-48; 1 Corinthians 13; Bible Dictionary “Charity”. HOW DID JESUS CHRIST DEMONSTRATE CHARITY: 1 Nephi 19:9; Alma 7:11-13; Ether 12:33-34; Luke 7:12-15. WHAT DO THESE VERSES TEACH YOU ABOUT CHARITY? 2 Nephi 26:30; Mosiah 2:17; Mosiah 28:3; Alma 7:24; Ether 12:28; D&C 88:125; 1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 4:8 see footnote a. **Scripture Mastery:**

17 And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn ^awisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the ^bservice of your ^cfellow beings ye are only in the service of your God. (Dallin H. Oaks said: “When we think of service, we usually think of the acts of our hands. But, as shown in earlier chapters, the Lord looks to our hearts as well as our hands. He is concerned not only with our acts but also with our motives. One of his earliest commandments to Israel was to ‘love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul’ (Deuteronomy 11:13). “In order to purify our service to God and to our fellowmen, it is therefore important to consider not only how we serve, but also why we serve. “People serve one another for different reasons, and some reasons are better than others. It has been said that ‘the biggest gap in the world is the gap between the justice of a cause and the motives of the people pushing it’ (John P. Grier, in Lawrence J. Peter, comp., *Peter's Quotations*, [New York: William Morrow and Co., 1977], p. 340).” (*Pure in Heart*, p. 38) Howard W. Hunter: “When we understand why we serve we will not worry about where we serve.” (*BYU Devotional*, Sept. 2, 1990 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 201) Marion G. Romney: “We lose our life by serving and lifting others. By so doing we experience the only true and lasting happiness. Service is not something we endure on this earth so we can earn the right to live in the celestial kingdom. Service is the very fiber of which an exalted life in the celestial kingdom is made. “Knowing that service is what gives our Father in Heaven fulfillment, and knowing that we want to be where He is and as He is, why must we be commanded to serve one another? Oh, for the glorious day when these things all come naturally because of the purity of our hearts. In that day there will be no need for a commandment because we will have experienced for ourselves that we are truly happy only when we are engaged in unselfish service. Let us use the freedom which comes from self-reliance in giving and serving” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 135; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 93). Joseph Fielding Smith: “I believe that one of the greatest sins of which the inhabitants of the earth are guilty today is the sin of ingratitude. . . . God is not pleased with the inhabitants of the earth but is angry with them because they will not acknowledge his hand in all things [see D&C 59:21]” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 270–71).)

18 Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to ^aserve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?

19 And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to ^athank your heavenly ^bKing!

20 I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the ^athanks and ^bpraise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and ^cpreserved you, and has caused that ye should ^drejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—

21 I say unto you that if ye should ^aserve him who has created you from the beginning, and is ^bpreserving you from day to day, by lending you ^cbreath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own ^dwill, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your ^ewhole souls yet ye would be ^funprofitable servants. (Joseph Fielding Smith: “Our Redeemer has done everything that is essential for our salvation, and he has taught us that if we serve him with all our soul, and all our days, yet we are unprofitable servants and have done only that which it was our duty to do. Paul says we were bought with a price, and we are not our own. Our Redeemer has a perfect right to command us, and all that we do is for our own sakes. He can do without us, but we cannot do without him. We are told that we are unprofitable servants, and so we are, if we think of trying to pay our Savior back for what he has done for us, for that we never can do; and we cannot by any number of acts, or a full life of faithful service, place our Savior in our debt.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 1, p. 15) Neal A. Maxwell “Both premortally and after the astonishing atonement, Jesus said ‘Glory be to the Father’ (see Moses 4:2; D&C 19:19). What a contrast to those of us unprofitable servants who, after doing a few good deeds, insist on keeping score! We worry over whether or not our little deed is noticed. We notice the size of the letters on the mortal marquees over

the tiny little theaters where our ‘own little plot is always being played.’ We continue to be overly concerned with getting mortal credit and over-establishing our worth. As God's children we do have great value and genuine intrinsic, individual worth. Must that intrinsic worth ever be at the mercy of our moods or of extrinsic, ephemeral measuring rods?” (*Men and Women of Christ*, p. 128) Hugh Nibley: “An unprofitable servant is somebody who consumes more than he produces. You can't possibly produce what you consume. You can't produce even a blade of grass. No one can pay his own way in this world. If you say you've paid your own way, you can't. He is ‘even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.’ So much for being independent. You are dependent on him every minute. You should know that and realize that other people are too. What he wants you to do is to help them. He doesn't need your help.” (*Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, lecture 28, p. 454))

22 And behold, all that he ^arequires of you is to ^bkeep his commandments; and he has ^cpromised you that if ye would keep his commandments ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth ^dvary from that which he hath said; therefore, if ye do ^ekeep his ^fcommandments he doth bless you and prosper you.

23 And now, in the first place, he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him.

24 And secondly, he doth ^arequire that ye should do as he hath commanded you; for which if ye do, he doth immediately ^bbless you; and therefore he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast? (Joseph Smith said that the Nephites and Lamanites were immediately blessed or cursed for their actions. We, generally, have to wait for the blessing. TPJS, 219)

25 And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth; yet ye were ^acreated of the ^bdust of the earth; but behold, it ^cbelongeth to him who created you. (Brigham Young: “The animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms abide the law of their Creator; the whole earth and all things pertaining to it, except man, abide the law of their creation.... We tame the animals and make them do our drudgery and administer to our wants in many ways, yet man alone is not tamed—he is not subject to his Great Creator. Our ignorant animals are faithful to us, and will do our bidding as long as they have any strength; yet man who is the offspring of the Gods, will not become subject to the most reasonable and self-exalting principles. How often have we witnessed a faithful animal conveying his master home so drunk that he could not see his way or sit up; yet his faithful animal will plod through mud, shun stumps, trees, and bad places, and land him safely at home.” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 9, pp. 246-7 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 205))

26 And I, even I, whom ye call your king, am ^ano better than ye yourselves are; for I am also of the dust. (We may miss the significance of Benjamin's words because we are a modern audience. An ancient audience would assume that their king was infinitely superior to them. In many societies the populace were forbidden to touch the person of the king, and in some societies, were forbidden to even look upon him. This reverence for the person of the king in many ways provided the religious sanction as a tool for governance. In any case, it would not be unusual at all for Benjamin's people, particularly the Zarahemlaites proper who had apparently become even more Mesoamericanized than the Nephites, to see Benjamin as more than a man (remembering his clear affirmation that he *was* only a man). It is in this context that Benjamin's placing of himself on the same level as his people before God should be seen. This was a startling declaration, one that certainly had to have perked the ears of his audience. Brant Gardner.) And ye behold that I am old, and am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother earth.

27 Therefore, as I said unto you that I had ^aserved you, ^bwalking with a clear conscience before God, even so I at this time have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless, and that your ^cblood should not come upon me, when I shall stand to be judged of God of the

things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you.

28 I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together that I might ^arid my garments of your blood, at this period of time when I am about to go down to my grave, that I might go down in peace, and my immortal ^bspirit may join the ^cchoirs above in singing the praises of a just God.

29 And moreover, I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might declare unto you that I can no longer be your teacher, nor your king;

30 For even at this time, my whole frame doth tremble exceedingly (not because of age, but because of the Spirit.) while attempting to speak unto you; but the Lord God doth support me, and hath suffered me that I should speak unto you, and hath commanded me that I should declare unto you this day, that **my son Mosiah is a ^aking and a ruler over you.**

(King Benjamin is now going to tell the people that God requires them to keep His commandments.)

31 And now, my brethren, I would that ye should do as ye have hitherto done. As ye have kept my commandments, and also the commandments of my father, and have prospered, and have been kept from falling into the hands of your enemies, even so if ye shall keep the commandments of my son, or the commandments of God which shall be delivered unto you by him, ye shall prosper in the land, and your enemies shall have no power over you.

32 But, O my people, beware lest there shall arise ^acontentions among you, and ye ^blist to ^cobey the evil spirit, which was spoken of by my father Mosiah.

33 For behold, there is a wo pronounced upon him who listeth to ^aobey that spirit; for if he listeth (desire) to obey him, and remaineth and dieth in his ^bsins, the same drinketh ^cdamnation to his own soul; for he receiveth for his wages an ^deverlasting ^epunishment, having transgressed the law of God contrary to his own knowledge. (Definition of sin.)

34 I say unto you, that there are not any among you, except it be your little children that have not been taught concerning these things, but what knoweth that ye are eternally ^aindebted to your heavenly Father, to render to him ^ball that you have and are; and also have been taught concerning the ^crecords which contain the prophecies which have been spoken by the holy prophets, even down to the time our father, Lehi, left Jerusalem;

35 And also, all that has been spoken by our fathers until now. And behold, also, they spake that which was commanded them of the Lord; therefore, they are ^ajust and true. (Righteous and trustworthy.)

36 And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go ^acontrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do ^bwithdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord (It is we who move away from the Spirit.), that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom's paths that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved—

37 I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open ^arebellion against God; therefore he ^blisteth to obey the evil spirit, and becometh an enemy to all righteousness; therefore, the Lord has no place in him, for he dwelleth not in ^cunholy temples. (Bruce R. McConkie: "Those saints who traverse the path of rebellion ordinarily do so by defying the will of God in lesser things, and then as their consciences and feelings become hardened, increasing rebellion becomes the established order. For a member of the Church to use tea, coffee, tobacco, or liquor is to rebel against the Lord and his law. Willful absence from sacrament meeting is a type of rebellion; so likewise is willful failure to pay an honest tithing. The degree of condemnation attending rebellion depends upon the nature of the defiance and the light enjoyed by the rebel. The Lord's anger is kindled against all the rebellious. (D. & C. 56:1; 63:2.) In due course they shall be pierced with much sorrow (D. & C. 1:3, 8) and cut off from the land of Zion. 'The rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim.' (D. & C. 64:35-36.) Those who have a perfect knowledge of the truth and who then come out in open rebellion will become sons of perdition. 'That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still.' (D. & C. 88:35.)" (Mormon Doctrine, p. 619))

38 **Therefore if that man ^arepenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands**

of divine^b justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own^c guilt, (John Taylor: “God has made each man a register within himself, and each man can read his own register, so far as he enjoys his perfect faculties. This can be easily comprehended. ... Let your memories run back, and you can remember the time when you did a good action, you can remember the time when you did a bad action; the thing is printed there, and you can bring it out and gaze upon it whenever you please. ... Man sleeps the sleep of death, but the spirit lives where the record of his deeds is kept--that does not die--man cannot kill it; there is no decay associated with it, and it still retains in all its vividness the remembrance of that which transpired before the separation by death of the body and the ever-living spirit. Man sleeps for a time in the grave, and by-and-by he rises again from the dead and goes to judgment; and then the secret thoughts of all men are revealed before Him with whom we have to do; we cannot hide them; it would be in vain for a man to say then, I did not do so-and-so; the command would be, Unravel and read the record which he has made of himself, and let it testify in relation to these things, and all could gaze upon it. If a man has acted fraudulently against his neighbor--has committed murder, or adultery, or any thing else, and wants to cover it up, that record will stare him in the face, he tells the story himself, and bears witness against himself. It is written that Jesus will judge not after the sight of the eye, or after the hearing of the ear, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth. It is not because somebody has seen things, or heard anything by which a man will be judged and condemned, but it is because that record that is written by the man himself in the tablets of his own mind--that record that cannot lie--will in that day be unfolded before God and angels, and those who shall sit as judges.” (*Journal of Discourses*, pp. 77-9) The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone. TPJS, p. 357.) which doth cause him to shrink from the^d presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and^e pain, and^f anguish, which is like an unquenchable^g fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever.

39 And now I say unto you, that^a mercy hath no claim on that man (**Being unrepentant he would be ineligible for mercy.**); therefore his final doom is to endure a never-ending^b torment. (Those who refuse to repent during their probationary period – the time between birth and resurrection – are sons of perdition; they do suffer the fullness of hell or the second death, even as King Benjamin said. Never repenting – even after death – they remain filthy still. In this regard, another doctrine that is not explicit in the Book of Mormon is that our "probationary state" includes the spirit state as well as mortality. Consequently, the doctrine of postmortal repentance is also missing; the tenor throughout is that physical death seals the fate of the wicked. Only in the dispensation of the fulness of times have we learned the meaning of 1 Peter 3:18-20 and 4:6. (See also D&C 138.) Although Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, it was not until January 21, 1836 that he learned of the doctrine of salvation for the dead. In a vision of the celestial world, he saw his deceased brother Alvin and "marveled how it was that he had obtained an inheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to gather Israel the second time, and had not been baptized for the remission of sins." (D&C 137:6.) Work for the dead began with the resurrection of Christ; before that event, the gospel was not taught to them. (Moses 7:38-39, 57.) Therefore, before Christ's ministry to the spirit world, the Book of Mormon doctrine that "this life is the [only] time for men to prepare to meet God" (Alma 34:32) was technically correct. Mercifully, modern revelation has extended the meaning of the phrase "this life." 2 Ne. 9:16, D&C 88:35. Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scriptures* 7:213-14.)

40 O, all ye^a old men, and also ye young men, and you little children who can understand my words, for I have spoken plainly unto you that ye might understand, I pray that ye should awake to a^b remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression.

41 And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and^a happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are^b blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out^c faithful to the end they are received into^d heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it. (Joseph Smith: “Happiness is the object and design

of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God. . . . “ . . . He never will institute an ordinance or give a commandment to His people that is not calculated in its nature to promote that happiness which He has designed” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 255–56). In the 1830 edition, there was no chapter break here.)

Mosiah 3

King Benjamin continues his address—The Lord Omnipotent shall minister among men in a tabernacle of clay—Blood shall come from every pore as he atones for the sins of the world—His is the only name whereby salvation comes—Men can put off the natural man and become saints through the atonement—The torment of the wicked shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone. [About 124 B.C.] (This chapter is a direct quote from an angel. The angel testifies of Christ.)

1 AND again my brethren, **I would call your attention** (At this point in his talk the children are probably restless and all the people can hear is the rustling of people moving about. So Benjamin calls their attention to listen to what he is saying. He is about to emphasize an important part of his talk.), for I have somewhat more to speak unto you; for behold, I have things to tell you concerning that which is to come.

2 **And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an ^aangel from God.** And he said unto me: ^bAwake; and I awoke, and behold he stood before me. (The angel is declaring the coming of the Savior into the world.)

3 And he said unto me: Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee; for behold, I am come to declare unto you the ^aglad tidings of great ^bjoy.

4 For the Lord hath heard thy prayers, and hath judged of thy ^arighteousness, and hath sent me to declare unto thee that thou mayest rejoice (Your good works have unlocked the heavens to you.); and that thou mayest declare unto thy people, that they may also be filled with joy.

5 For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the ^aLord ^bOmnipotent (Unless God had power over all things, and was able by his power to control all things, and thereby deliver his creatures who put their trust in him from the power of all beings that might seek their destruction, whether in heaven, or on earth, or in hell, men could not be saved. Lectures on Faith, 4:12) who ^creigneth, who was, and is from all ^deternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a ^etabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty ^fmiracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the ^gblind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. (These verses explain the ministry of Jesus. Mosiah 3:5-11 is a catalog of the earthly ministry of Jesus, capped by the eternal saving mission he accomplishes during that mission. With the announcement of good tidings of great joy to Mary she received information she did not know. Did this happen to Benjamin? Not entirely. There are some details of Jesus' ministry that appear in the Book of Mormon for the first time with Benjamin's speech. However, much of the substantive content of this revelation was already known, and available at least through the small plates of Nephi. The differences in the material indicate that Benjamin received a vision of Jesus' ministry, and that he is reporting his own experience rather than citing scripture from the small (and probably large) plates of Nephi. Even where there is thematic overlap, Benjamin is giving the information in a fresh way. Certainly the prophetic vision Benjamin received would be most prominent in his recollection, even though he is certain to have read similar experiences from earlier prophets. Brant Gardner.)

6 And he shall cast out ^adevils, or the ^bevil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men.

7 **And lo, he shall ^asuffer ^btemptations, and pain of body, ^chunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can ^dsuffer, except it be unto death; for behold, ^eblood cometh from every pore, so great**

shall be his ^fanguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people. (He could bleed at every pore because his mother was Mary, and overcome it because his Father was God. Christ's suffering drew blood from every pore of his body. This may seem impossible to us, but it is a described medical condition: "Although this is a very rare phenomenon, bloody sweat (hematidrosis or hemohidrosis) may occur in highly emotional states or in persons with bleeding disorders. As a result of hemorrhage into the sweat glands, the skin becomes fragile and tender." (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," vol. 255, no. 11, pp. 1455-63) James E. Talmage: "Christ's agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause...He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion. In that hour of anguish Christ met and overcame all the horrors that Satan, 'the prince of this world' (John 16:11) could inflict... In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world. Modern revelation assists us to a partial understanding of the awful experience. In March 1830, the glorified Lord, Jesus Christ, thus spake: 'For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent, but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I, which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit: and would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink -- nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.' (D&C 19:16-19) Luke, the only Gospel-writer who mentions sweat and blood in connection with our Lord's agony in Gethsemane, states that 'his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground' (22:44). Many critical expositors deny that there was an actual extrusion of blood, on the grounds that the evangelist does not positively affirm it, and that the three apostles, who were the only human witnesses, could not have distinguished blood from sweat falling in drops, as they watched from a distance in the night, even if the moon, which at the passover season was full, had been unobscured. Modern scripture removes all doubt. See D&C 19:16-19, also 18:11. See further a specific prediction of the bloody sweat, Mosiah 3:7." (*Jesus the Christ*, pp. 613-4, 620) Bruce R. McConkie: "This sacrifice...took place in Gethsemane when he sweat great goutts of blood from every pore...And it also took place as he hung on the cruel cross of Calvary. During the last three hours of that agonizing ordeal, while darkness overspread the land, all the pains and suffering of Gethsemane returned." (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 109 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 206))

8 And he shall be called ^aJesus ^bChrist, the ^cSon of God, the ^dFather of heaven and earth, the ^eCreator of all things from the beginning; and his ^fmother shall be called Mary.

9 And lo, he cometh unto his own, that ^asalvation (**exaltation**) might come unto the children of men even through ^bfaith on his name; and even after all this they shall consider him a man (Neal A. Maxwell: "My friends and neighbors, brothers and sisters all, the most important question in human history is one which will not go away. It echoes down through the corridors of time. And 'Jesus asked them,... What think ye of Christ?' (Matt 22:42) sooner or later, this is the vital question for all mortals including you, my friends. And a failure to answer this question is an answer." (Investigator Fireside, Jan. 5, 1984) Harold B. Lee: "What think ye of Christ? Today we should ask ourselves the question, in answer to what the Master asked of those in His day, 'What think ye of Christ?' (Matthew 22:42.) We ought to ask as we would say it today, "What think we of Christ?" and then make it a little more personal and ask, "What think I of Christ?" Do I think of Him as the Redeemer of my soul? Do I think of Him with no doubt in my mind as the one who appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith? Do I believe that He established this church upon the earth? Do I accept Him as the Savior of this world? Am I true to my

covenants, which in the waters of baptism, if I understood, meant that I would stand as a witness of Him at all times, and in all things, and in all places, wherever I would be, even until death? (See Mosiah 18:9.)” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, p. 8)), and say that he hath a ^cdevil, and shall ^dscourge him, and shall ^ecrucify him. (The first and most graphic description in the Book of Mormon of Jesus’ sufferings was provided by this angel.)

10 And he shall ^arise the ^bthird day from the dead (“Writing to the Corinthians, Paul said, ‘He rose again the third day according to the scriptures’ (1 Corinthians 15:4; italics added). Paul is quoting a text that is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament of our day. Significantly, the Book of Mormon attributes this knowledge to Zenos, an Old Testament prophet (1 Nephi 19:10). This understanding was common among the Nephite people (see 2 Nephi 25:13).” (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 149)); and behold, he standeth to ^cjudge the world (President Joseph F. Smith wrote: “I believe that our Savior . . . no doubt possessed a foreknowledge of all the vicissitudes through which he would have to pass in the mortal tabernacle. . . . If Christ knew beforehand, so did we. But in coming here, we forgot all, that our agency might be free indeed.” Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scripture*, 7:215); and behold, all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men.

11 For behold, and also his ^ablood ^batoneth for the sins of those who have ^cfallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the ^dwill of God concerning them, or who have ^eignorantly sinned.

12 But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he ^arebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such except it be through repentance and faith on the ^bLord Jesus Christ. (When we know the law and act contrary to it, that is sin.)

13 And the Lord God hath sent his holy ^aprophets among all the children of men, to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive ^bremission of their sins, and rejoice with exceedingly great joy, even ^cas though he had already come among them.

14 Yet the Lord God saw that his people were a ^astiffnecked people, and he appointed unto them a ^blaw, even the ^claw of Moses.

15 And many signs, and wonders, and ^atypes, and shadows showed he unto them, concerning his coming; and also holy prophets spake unto them concerning his coming; and yet they ^bhardened their hearts, and understood not that the ^claw of Moses availeth nothing ^dexcept it were through the ^eatonement of his blood.

16 And even if it were possible that little ^achildren could sin (They understood that children under the age of accountability cannot sin.) they could not be saved; but I say unto you they are ^bblessed; for behold, as in Adam, or by nature, they fall, even so the blood of Christ ^catoneth for their sins. (Salvation is in Christ alone. Even for children who cannot sin, they cannot be saved except through the atonement of Christ.)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST: WHAT IS FAITH? Alma 32:21; Ether 12:6; Hebrews 11:1; see footnote b; Topical Guide “Faith”; Bible Dictionary: “Faith”; HOW DO YOU OBTAIN FAITH, AND WHAT CAN YOU DO THROUGH FAITH? 2 Nephi 25:29; 2 Nephi 26:13; Mosiah 4:6-12; Alma 32; Helaman 15:7-8; Ether 12:7-22; Moroni 7:33; Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11. WHAT BLESSINGS COME THROUGH FAITH? Mosiah 3:17; Mosiah 5:1-15; Helaman 5:9-12; John 14:6

17 And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be ^ano other name given nor any other way nor means whereby ^bsalvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the ^cLord Omnipotent.

18 For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just; and the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy; but men drink ^adamnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and ^bbecome as little children, and believe that ^csalvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the ^datoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: OUR LIFE ON EARTH: PROBATION OR TESTING PERIOD 2

Nephi 2:21; Alma 12:21-24; Abraham 3:25-26; 2 Nephi 9:27; Alma 34:31-35; Mosiah 3:19; Alma 42:2-10 CHOICE 2 Nephi 2:26-29; Joshua 24:15; GOOD AND EVIL Moroni 7:12-19; SIN Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10; 1 John 3:4; THE UNCLEAN CANNOT BE WITH GOD 1 Nephi 10:20-21; 3 Nephi 27:19; Moses 6:57; Alma 41:10-11 PREACH MY GOSPEL: SCRIPTURE STUDY: WHAT ARE SOME ATTRIBUTES LISTED IN THE SCRIPTURES? Mosiah 3:19; Alma 7:23; D&C 4; D&C 121:41-45; Articles of Faith 1:13; Philippians 4:8; 2 Peter 1:5-8.

Scripture Mastery: 19 For the ^anatural ^bman is an ^cenemy to God, and has been from the ^dfall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he ^eyields to the enticings of the Holy ^fSpirit, (Even though we are fallen, the Holy Ghost entices us to repent.) and ^gputteth off the ^hnatural man and becometh a ⁱsaint (How do we become saints? • Humble ourselves (see v. 18). • Become as little children (see v. 18). • Have faith in Jesus Christ (see v. 18). • Yield to the promptings of the Holy Ghost (see v. 19). • Put off the natural man (see v. 19). • Be submissive, meek, patient, full of love, willing to submit to the Lord (see v. 19) All through the atonement of Christ) through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a ^jchild, ^ksubmissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

(Bruce R. McConkie: "If a man 'yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord' (Mosiah 3:19), then he is born again. His spiritual death ceases. He becomes alive to the things of the Spirit; he returns to the presence of God because he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost; and he is alive to the things of righteousness. He crucifies the old man of sin, becomes a new creature of the Holy Ghost, and walks in a newness of life. This is what is meant by being born again." (*The Promised Messiah*, p. 350))

20 And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the ^aknowledge of a ^bSavior shall spread throughout ^cevery nation, kindred, tongue, and people. (The Book of Mormon is to be the instrument by which this prophecy is to be fulfilled. DCBM, 2:154. The complete fulfillment of this prophecy will be millennial.)

21 And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found ^ablameless before God, except it be little children, only through repentance and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent.

22 And even at this time, when thou shalt have taught thy people the things which the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, even then are they found no more blameless in the sight of God, only according to the words which I have spoken unto thee.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: KINGDOMS OF GLORY: RESURRECTION AND RESTORATION: 2 Nephi 9:14-15; Jacob 6:8-9; Alma 42:13-15, 22-23. **JUDGMENT:** 2 Nephi 28:33; Alma 5:15-21; D&C 132:12; 137:9; Mosiah 3:23-25; Alma 12:12-14; John 5:22. **KINGDOMS OF GLORY:** 3 Nephi 28:10; D&C 137; 1 Corinthians 15:41-42; D&C 76: Introduction; Matthew 5:48; JST, 1 Corinthians 15:40. **ETERNAL LIFE:** 2 Nephi 31:17-21; D&C 45:8; John 3:16; D&C 14:7; D&C 93:19; John 17:3; D&C 29:43-44

23 And now I have spoken the words which the Lord God hath commanded me.

24 And thus saith the Lord: They shall stand as a bright testimony against this people, at the judgment day; whereof they shall be judged, every man according to his ^aworks, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

25 And if they be evil they are consigned to an awful ^aview of their own guilt and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of ^bmisery and ^cendless torment (Endless here does not mean without end. It has more to do with the quality of the torment rather than duration. Endless torment means God's torment. D&C 19: 4 And surely every man must ^arepent or ^bsuffer, for I, God, am ^cendless. 5 Wherefore, I ^arevoke not the judgments which I shall pass, but woes shall go forth, weeping, ^bwailing and gnashing of teeth, yea, to those who are found on my ^cleft hand. 6 Nevertheless, it is ^anot written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written ^bendless ^ctorment. 7 Again, it is written ^aeternal damnation; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures,

that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory. 8 Wherefore, I will explain unto you this ^amystery, for it is meet unto you to know even as mine apostles. 9 I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my ^arest. 10 For, behold, the ^amystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am ^bendless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is **endless** ^cpunishment, for ^dEndless is my name. Wherefore— 11 ^aEternal punishment is God's punishment. 12 **Endless** punishment is God's punishment.), from whence they can no more return; therefore they have drunk damnation to their own souls.

26 Therefore, they have drunk out of the ^acup of the wrath of God, which justice could no more deny unto them than it could deny that ^bAdam should fall because of his partaking of the forbidden ^cfruit; therefore, ^dmercy could have claim on them no more forever.

27 And their ^atorment is as a ^blake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up ^cforever and ever. Thus hath the Lord commanded me. Amen. (Joseph Smith: "A man is his own tormenter and his own condemner. Hence the saying, They shall go into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone. I say, so is the torment of man." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.357))